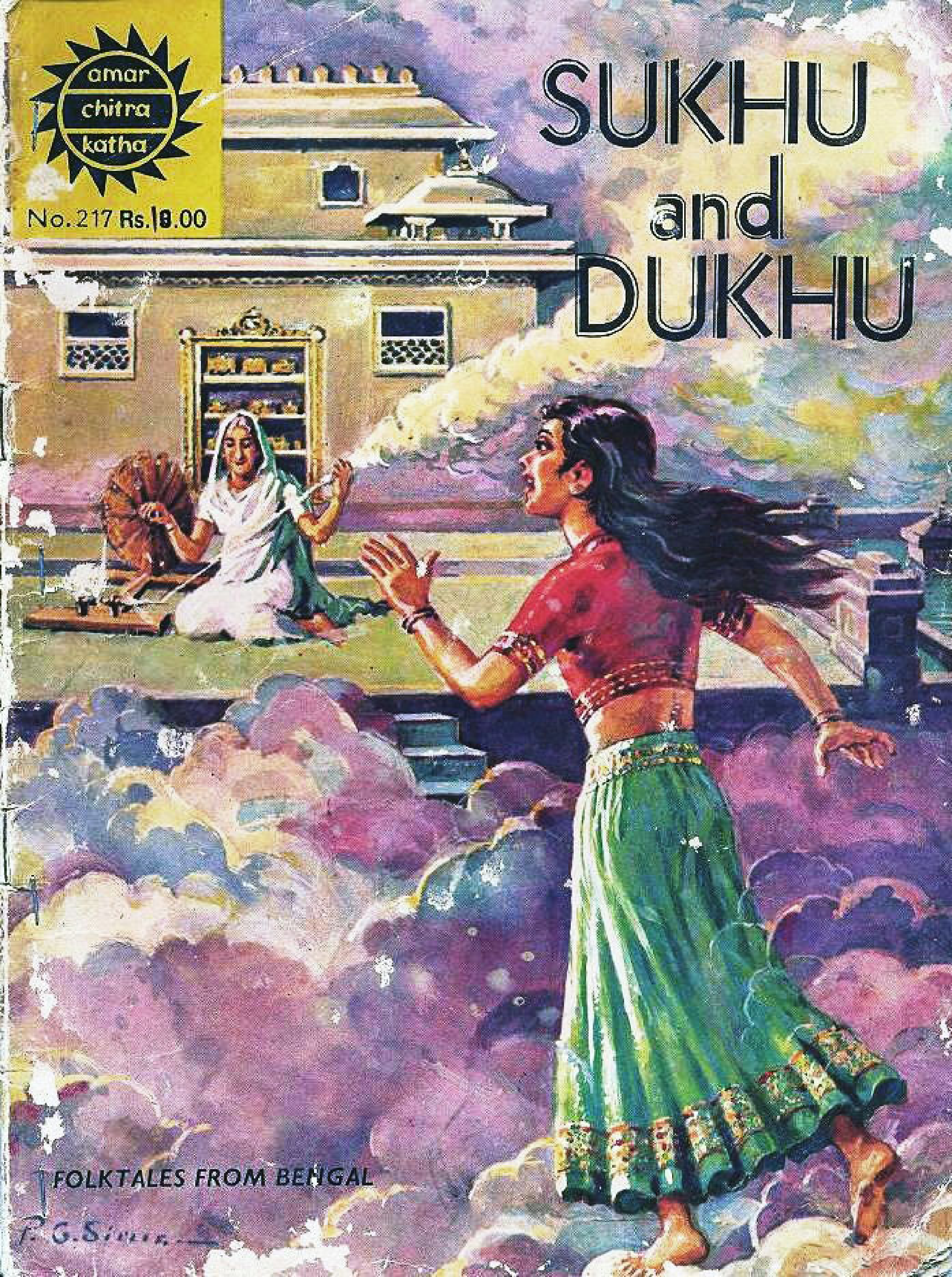
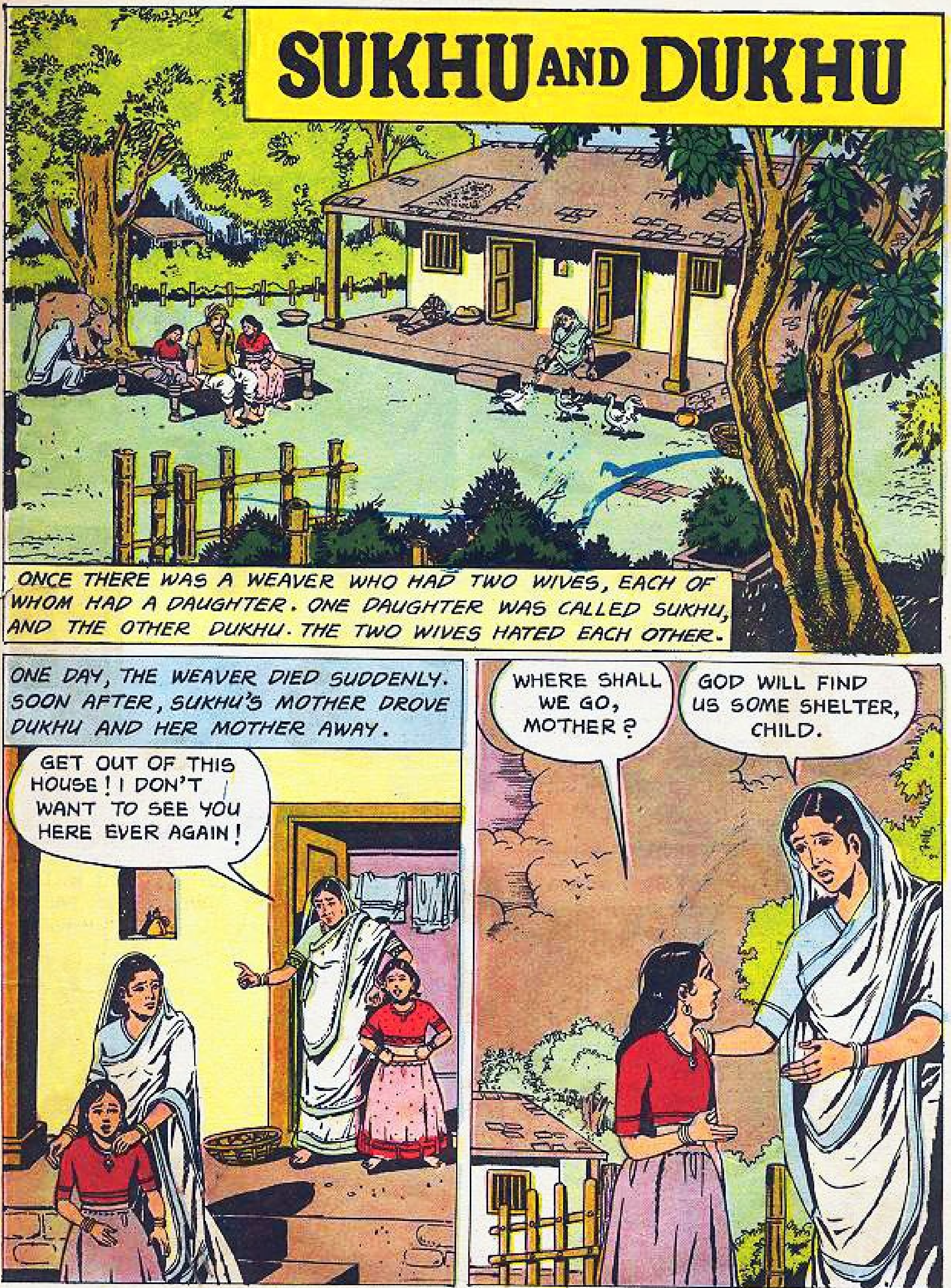
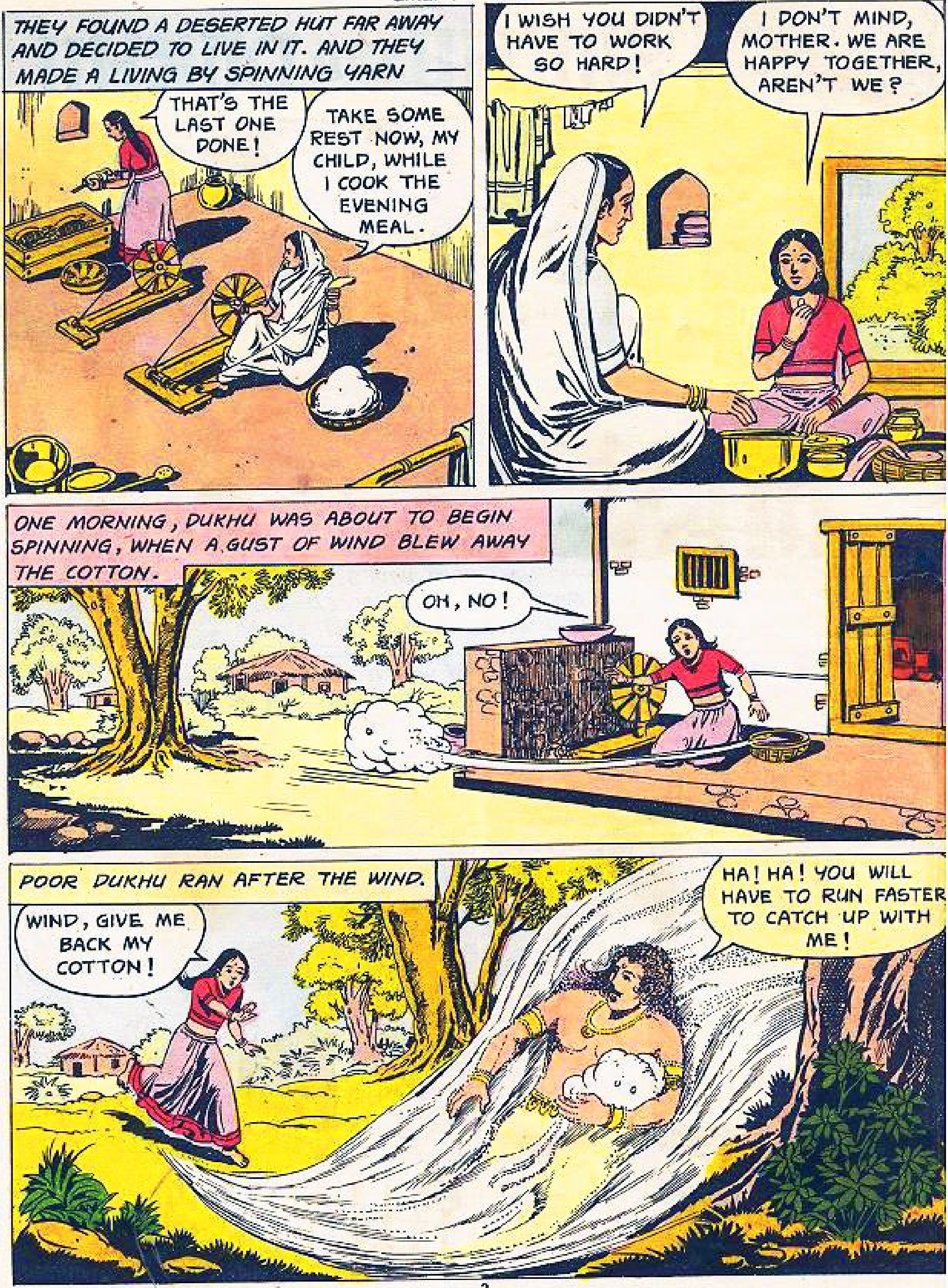

amar chitra katha
No.217 Rs.18.00
SUKHU and DUKHU
FOLKTALES FROM BENGAL


SUKHU AND DUKHU
ONCE THERE WAS A WEAVER WHO HAD TWO WIVES, EACH OF WHOM HAD A DAUGHTER. ONE DAUGHTER WAS CALLED SUKHU, AND THE OTHER DUKHU. THE TWO WIVES HATED EACH OTHER.
ONE DAY, THE WEAVER DIED SUDDENLY. SOON AFTER, SUKHU'S MOTHER DROVE DUKHU AND HER MOTHER AWAY.
GET OUT OF THIS HOUSE! I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU HERE EVER AGAIN!
WHERE SHALL WE GO, MOTHER?
GOD WILL FIND US SOME SHELTER, CHILD.


THEY FOUND A DESERTED HUT FAR AWAY AND DECIDED TO LIVE IN IT. AND THEY MADE A LIVING BY SPINNING YARN —
THAT'S THE LAST ONE DONE!
TAKE SOME REST NOW, MY CHILD, WHILE I COOK THE EVENING MEAL.
I WISH YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO WORK SO HARD!
I DON'T MIND, MOTHER. WE ARE HAPPY TOGETHER, AREN'T WE?
ONE MORNING, DUKHU WAS ABOUT TO BEGIN SPINNING, WHEN A GUST OF WIND BLEW AWAY THE COTTON.
OH, NO!
POOR DUKHU RAN AFTER THE WIND.
WIND, GIVE ME BACK MY COTTON!
HA! HA! YOU WILL HAVE TO RUN FASTER TO CATCH UP WITH ME!

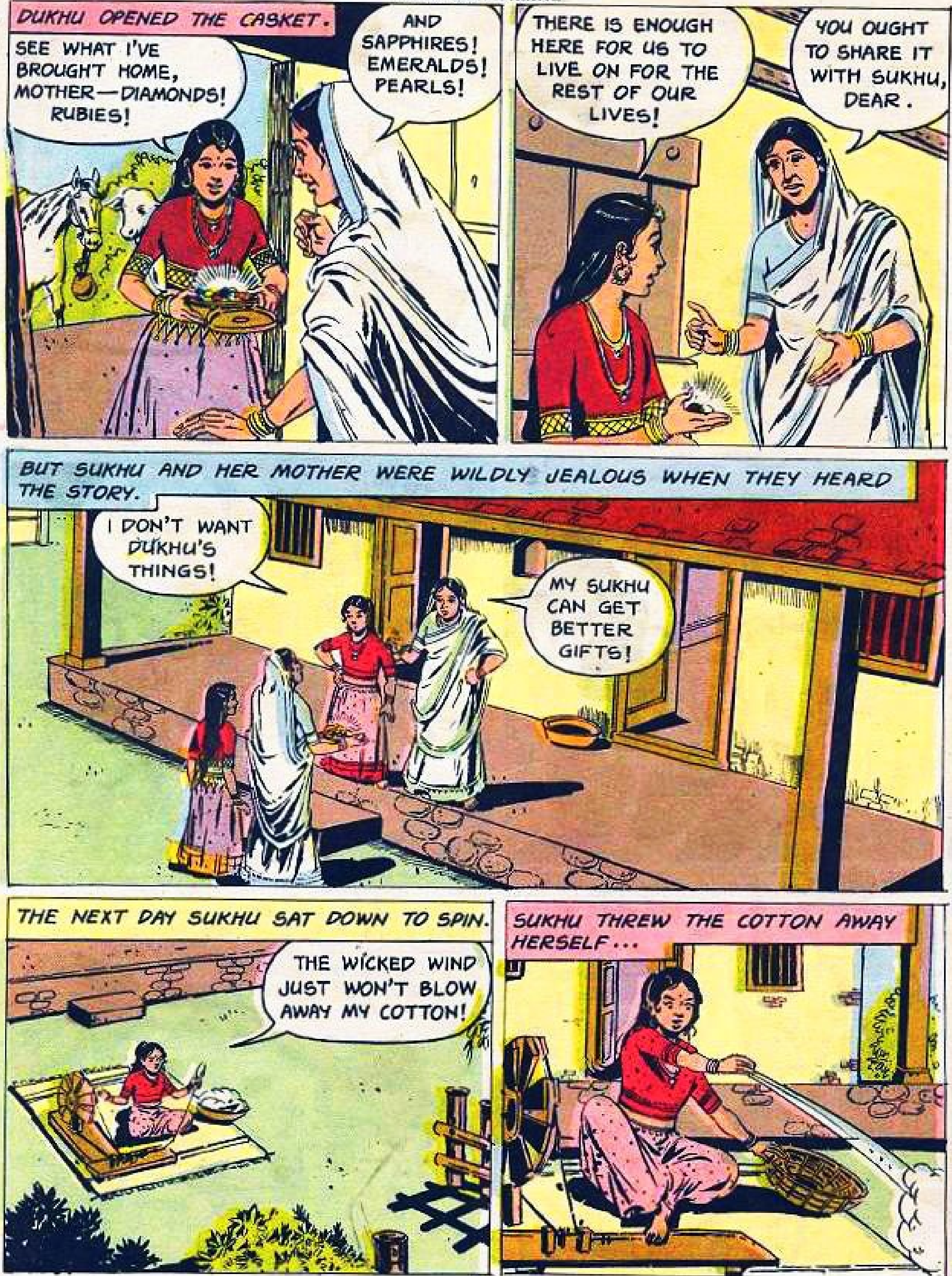

THE NAUGHTY WIND BLEW THE COTTON FURTHER AND FURTHER AWAY.
O WIND, GIVE ME BACK MY COTTON, PLEASE!
AT LAST THE WIND TOOK PITY ON HER —
GO TO MY MOTHER, THE OLD WOMAN IN THE MOON, WHO WEAVES PUFFS OF CLOUD ALL DAY LONG.
SHE WILL GIVE YOU BACK YOUR COTTON.
THANK YOU, WIND. I WILL RUN TO HER AS FAST AS I CAN!
AS DUKHU WAS RUNNING, SHE PASSED A COW —
DUKHU! I AM HUNGRY. WON'T YOU GIVE ME SOME HAY TO EAT?
DUKHU STOPPED AT ONCE.
POOR DEAR, YOU MUST BE VERY HUNGRY! HERE'S SOME HAY FOR YOU.


SHE RESUMED HER JOURNEY BUT, VERY SOON, SHE HAD TO STOP AGAIN. THIS TIME IT WAS A BANYAN TREE THAT NEEDED HELP.
DUKHU, THE BIRDS HAVE MADE SUCH A MESS HERE! DO SWEEP THE GROUND.
DUKHU STOPPED AND SWEPT THE GROUND NEAR THE TREE.
IT'S NICE AND CLEAN ALL AROUND HERE NOW.
SHE BEGAN TO RUN AGAIN, BUT A HORSE STOPPED HER —
DUKHU, I AM VERY THIRSTY!
WITHOUT A WORD, DUKHU WENT TO DRAW WATER FROM A WELL NEAR BY.
THIS WILL QUENCH YOUR THIRST, DEAR. NOW I MUST HURRY AWAY.
DUKHU RAN FASTER AND FASTER...


... TILL AT LAST SHE REACHED THE OLD WOMAN IN THE MOON.
PLEASE, GRANDMA, THE WIND CARRIED AWAY MY COTTON, AND ...
... AS WE ARE VERY POOR, MAY I HAVE IT BACK, PLEASE?
WHAT A SWEET LITTLE GIRL!


OF COURSE, YOU SHALL HAVE YOUR COTTON, DEAR. BUT, FIRST, YOU MUST TAKE THREE DIPS IN THAT POOL.
DUKHU DID AS SHE WAS TOLD.
IT WAS AN ENCHANTED POOL. WHEN DUKHU EMERGED, SHE LOOKED BEAUTIFUL. SHE WAS DRESSED IN GRAND CLOTHES AND FINE JEWELLERY.
BUT SHE WAS NOT AWARE OF THIS. SHE WENT BACK TO THE OLD WOMAN.
MAY I HAVE MY COTTON NOW?
ALL THOSE CASKETS ARE FULL OF COTTON. TAKE ONE OF THEM.
DUKHU TOOK UP THE SMALLEST CASKET.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS, GRANDMA!
YOU ARE WELCOME, MY CHILD!

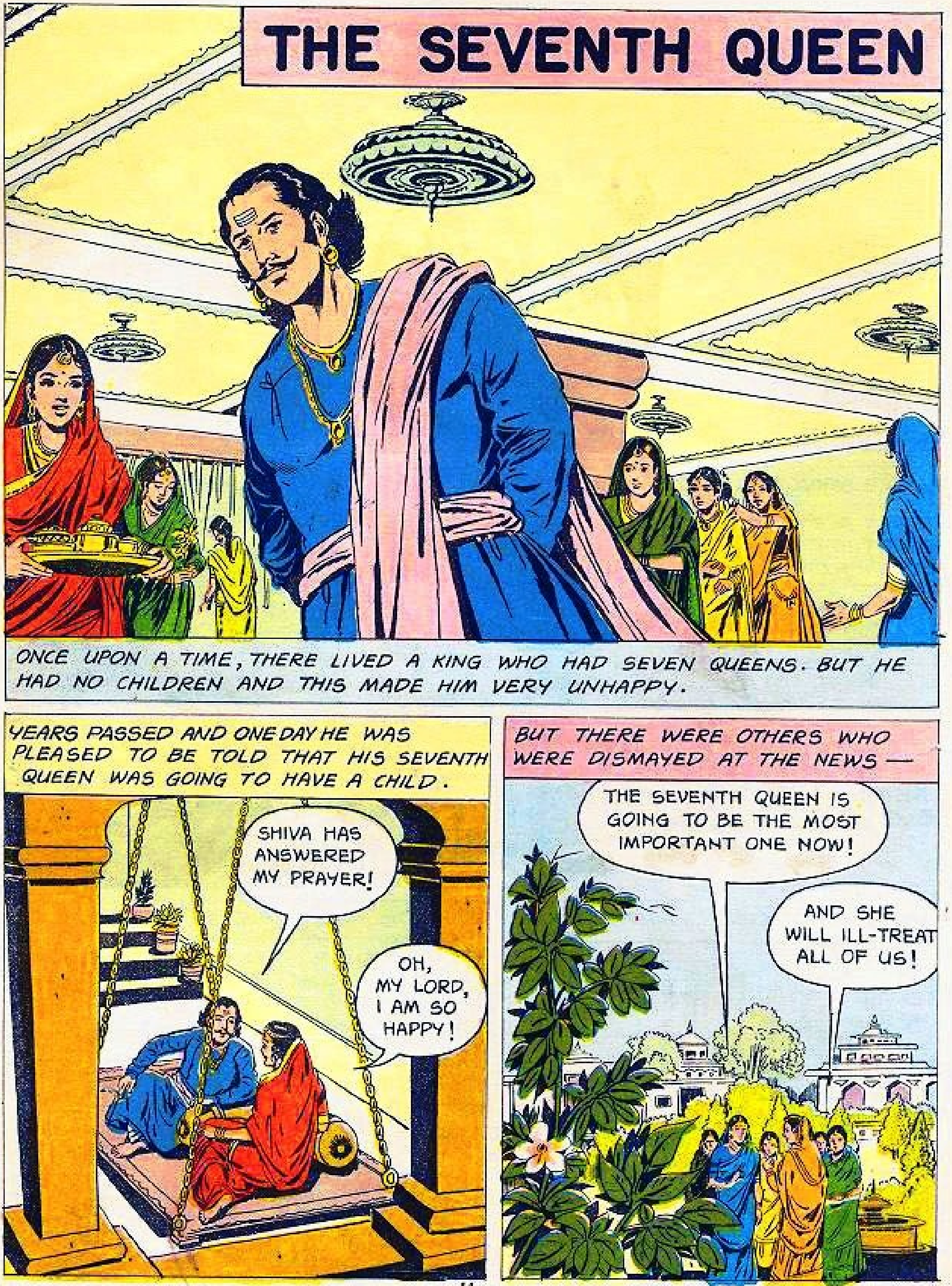

THEN DUKHU STARTED RUNNING HOME. ON THE WAY, THE HORSE STOPPED HER.
YOU WERE KIND TO ME, DUKHU. HERE'S A PONY FOR YOU TO RIDE ON!
THANK YOU.
DUKHU MOUNTED THE PONY AND RODE ON.
STOP A WHILE, DUKHU!
TAKE THIS BAG OF GOLD FOR YOU WERE KIND TO ME WHEN I NEEDED HELP.
THANK YOU!
NEXT SHE PASSED THE COW, WHO GAVE DUKHU HER CALF. LADEN WITH ALL THESE PRESENTS, DUKHU REACHED HOME AT LAST.
DUKHU! I WAS SO WORRIED ABOUT YOU!
I'M SORRY, MOTHER, I COULDN'T STOP TO LET YOU KNOW BEFORE RUNNING OFF. BUT I'VE HAD SUCH AN ADVENTURE!


DUKHU OPENED THE CASKET.
SEE WHAT I'VE BROUGHT HOME, MOTHER—DIAMONDS! RUBIES!
AND SAPPHIRES! EMERALDS! PEARLS!
THERE IS ENOUGH HERE FOR US TO LIVE ON FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES!
YOU OUGHT TO SHARE IT WITH SUKHU, DEAR.
BUT SUKHU AND HER MOTHER WERE WILDLY JEALOUS WHEN THEY HEARD THE STORY.
I DON'T WANT DUKHU'S THINGS!
MY SUKHU CAN GET BETTER GIFTS!
THE NEXT DAY SUKHU SAT DOWN TO SPIN.
THE WICKED WIND JUST WON'T BLOW AWAY MY COTTON!
SUKHU THREW THE COTTON AWAY HERSELF...


...AND CRIED OUT—
YOU HORRID, NASTY WIND! GIVE ME BACK MY COTTON AT ONCE!
THE WIND SAID NOTHING, BUT SUKHU RAN OUT OF HER HOUSE. SHE CAME ACROSS THE COW—
SUKHU, PLEASE GIVE ME SOME HAY!
WHY SHOULD I DO THAT? I HAVE NO TIME!
SWEEP THE GROUND BENEATH ME PLEASE, SUKHU.
NO!
SUKHU REFUSED TO HELP ANYONE ON HER WAY. AT LAST SHE CAME TO THE OLD WOMAN IN THE MOON.
GET UP, OLD WOMAN! GIVE ME MORE THAN YOU GAVE DUKHU!
WHAT AN ILL-MANNERED CHILD!
HURRY UP! WHY ARE YOU TAKING SO LONG?
TAKE A DIP IN THAT POOL FIRST—ONLY ONE DIP.


SUKHU TOOK A DIP AND EMERGED AS BEAUTIFUL AS DUKHU.
I'LL TAKE ANOTHER DIP. THEN I'LL HAVE MORE THAN DUKHU!
SHE TOOK ANOTHER DIP AND THEN LOOKED AT HER REFLECTION. WHAT SHE SAW HORRIFIED HER.
OH! OH! WHAT HAVE I DONE!
I TOLD YOU TO TAKE JUST ONE DIP!
I WANTED TO HAVE MORE THAN DUKHU!
GREED AND JEALOUSY BRING THEIR OWN PUNISHMENT.

THE SEVENTH QUEEN




THE SEVENTH QUEEN GAVE BIRTH TO SEVEN SONS AND A DAUGHTER. AS SHE WAS VERY TIRED, SHE FELL INTO A DEEP SLEEP. THE OTHER QUEENS HATCHED AN EVIL PLAN —
LET US TAKE AWAY THE CHILDREN...
...AND BURY THEM IN THE ASH-HEAP!
AFTER SOME TIME —
WHERE IS MY CHILD? IS IT A BOY OR A GIRL?
CHILD? THERE IS NO CHILD! YOU GAVE BIRTH TO THOSE CRABS!
THE SEVENTH QUEEN FAINTED FROM THE SHOCK.
IT SERVES HER RIGHT!
OUR CLEVER PLAN HAS WORKED! HA! HA! HA!
WHEN THE KING HEARD OF IT —
SHE MUST BE A WITCH!! I WILL SEND HER AWAY!
WHAT AN UNHAPPY SITUATION.


THE SEVENTH QUEEN WAS BANISHED FROM THE KINGDOM —
HOW UNFORTUNATE I AM!
SOON AFTER HER DEPARTURE A STRANGE THING OCCURRED —
WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ALL THE FLOWERS?
AND WHY ARE THE BIRDS SILENT?
THE ROYAL PRIEST CAME TO THE KING.
YOUR MAJESTY, HOW CAN I WORSHIP THE LORD WITHOUT A SINGLE FLOWER?
BUT A FEW FLOWERS WERE GATHERED THIS MORNING. WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THEM?
THEY JUST WITHERED AWAY!


I CAN'T UNDER-STAND WHAT'S GOING ON!
I'LL REWARD ANYONE WHO CAN BRING ME A FLOWER.
A FEW HOURS LATER —
SIRE, THERE ARE EIGHT CHAMPAK FLOWERS BLOOMING ON THE TREE ON THE ASH-HEAP!
GO AND GET THEM AT ONCE!
BUT WHEN THE GARDENER WENT TO PICK THEM, THE TREE SHOT UP HIGHER AND HIGHER BEYOND HIS REACH.
YOU CAN'T TOUCH US OH NO, OH NO! LET THE FIRST QUEEN COME TO HER, WE'LL GO!
I MUST FETCH THE FIRST QUEEN!


THE FIRST QUEEN WAS WORRIED WHEN SHE WAS TOLD ABOUT IT.
I CAN'T COME NOW! I AM VERY BUSY!
I AM AFRAID TO GO... TO THAT ASH-HEAP!
BUT IT WILL LOOK VERY ODD IF YOU DON'T GO!
THE FIRST QUEEN FINALLY OVERCAME HER FEAR AND WENT TO THE ASH-HEAP. SHE TRIED TO PLUCK THE FLOWERS.
I CAN'T REACH THEM EITHER.
YOU CAN'T GET US OH NO, OH NO! LET THE SECOND QUEEN COME TO HER, WE WILL GO!
THE SECOND, THIRD, FOURTH AND FIFTH QUEENS CAME AND HAD THE SAME EXPERIENCE. WHEN THE SIXTH QUEEN TRIED —
YOU CAN'T GET US. OH NO, OH NO! LET THE KING COME TO HIM WE WILL GO!
THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO! THE KING MUST BE SENT FOR.
OH, DEAR! WHAT IF HE FINDS OUT THE TRUTH!

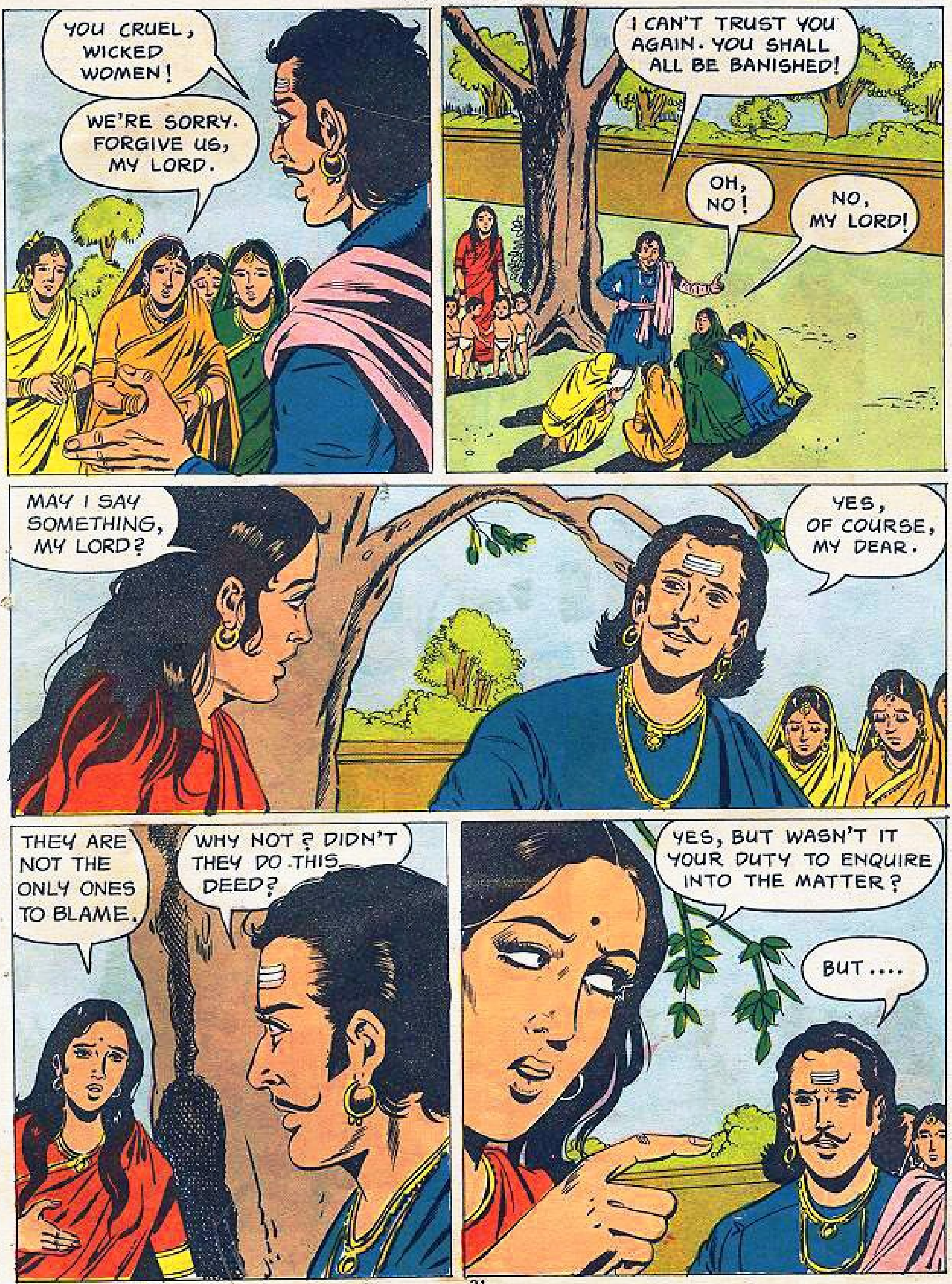

THE KING WAS GIVEN THE MESSAGE OF THE FLOWERS.
HOW STRANGE!
EVERYTHING HAS BEEN STRANGE OF LATE! I'LL GO TO THE ASH-HEAP.
FIND ME THE TALLEST LADDER.
I CAN'T REACH THEM!
I MUST HAVE THE FLOWERS! GET ME ANOTHER LADDER!
YOU CAN'T GET US OH NO, OH NO! LET THE SEVENTH QUEEN COME TO HER WE'LL GO.

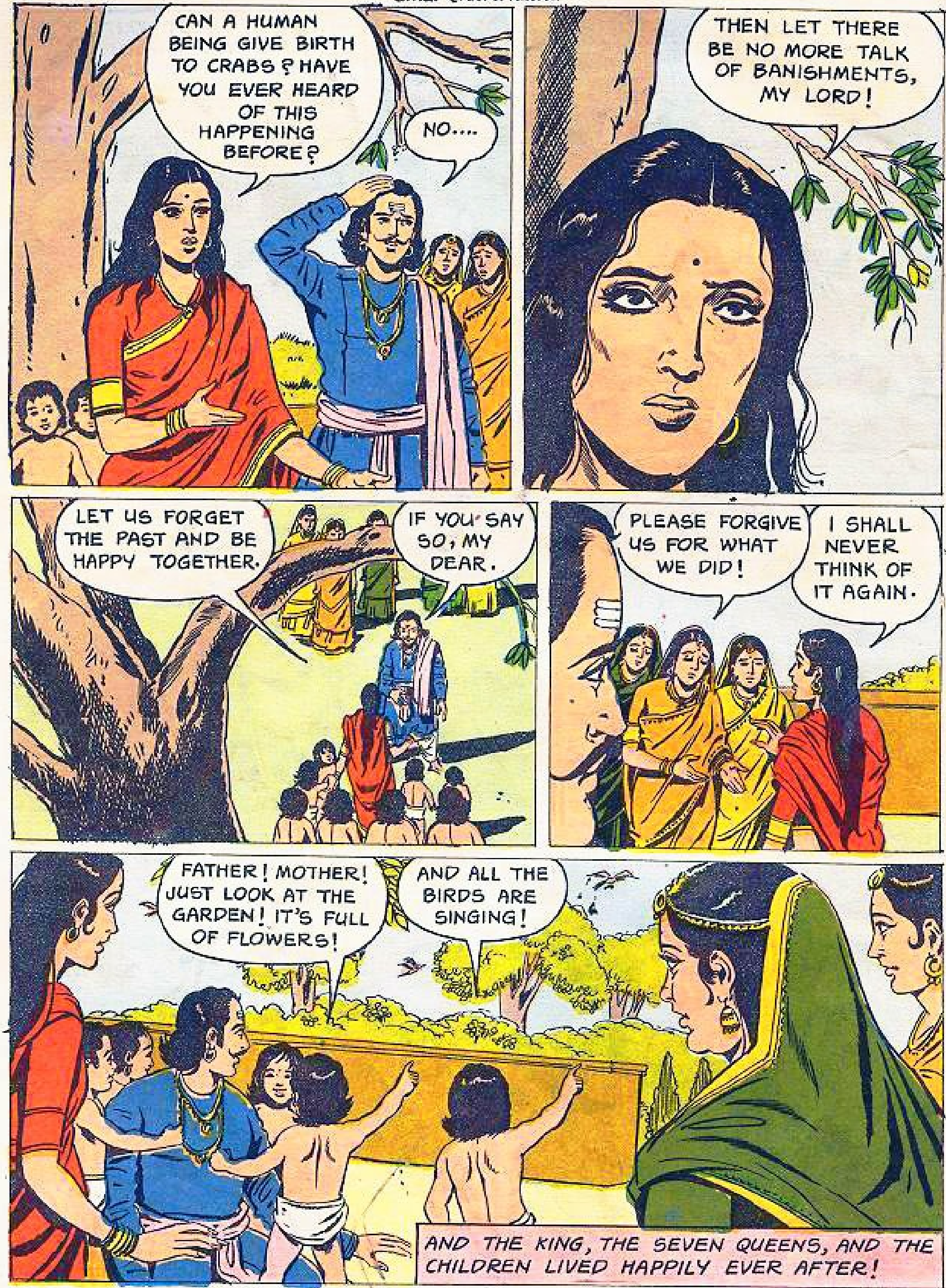

BUT I HAVE BANISHED THE SEVENTH QUEEN!
THE SEVENTH QUEEN! THE SEVENTH QUEEN! GO AND FIND THE SEVENTH QUEEN!
SHE MUST BE FOUND!
AFTER ALL THIS TIME?
HAVE IT ANNOUNCED!
VERY WELL, SIRE.
THE KING'S MEN WENT FAR AND WIDE, SEARCHING FOR THE SEVENTH QUEEN.
THERE'S NO ONE IN THIS FOREST.
THE POOR QUEEN MUST BE DEAD BY NOW!


IT'S A HOPELESS TASK.
WE'LL NEVER FIND HER!
THE SEVENTH QUEEN HAD BEEN LIVING ALONE IN A CAVE.
WHAT'S THE POINT OF LIVING LIKE THIS!
IF ONLY I HAD MY CHILDREN WITH ME... EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE CRABS!
THEN ONE OF THE KING'S SOLDIERS SAW HER FROM A DISTANCE.
SURELY THAT'S OUR QUEEN!


WHO ARE YOU?
WE'VE BEEN SENT BY THE KING TO BRING YOU BACK.
AM I DREAMING? CAN IT REALLY BE TRUE?
THE CARRIAGE IS WAITING. I'LL BRING IT HERE.
WHEN THE SEVENTH QUEEN REACHED THE PALACE —
PLEASE BRING ME THOSE FLOWERS!
THE QUEEN LOOKED UP AT THE FLOWERS.
HOW BEAUTIFUL THEY ARE! WHY DO I FEEL SO DRAWN TOWARDS THEM?
COME DEARS! COME DOWN TO ME!
THEN —
I FEEL SO HAPPY! IT IS AS IF I HAVE FOUND MY CHILDREN AGAIN!


A MOMENT LATER, THE FLOWERS CHANGED INTO SEVEN PRINCES AND A PRINCESS.
MOTHER!
MOTHER!
CAN IT REALLY BE TRUE? ARE YOU REALLY MY CHILDREN?
YES, MOTHER, WE ARE ALL YOURS!
OH, HEAVENS!
WE'RE IN FOR IT NOW!
WHAT SHALL WE DO?
LET US RUN AWAY AND HIDE!
BUT THE KING TURNED STERNLY UPON THEM —
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? WHY ARE YOU SNEAKING AWAY SO GUILTILY?
THEY WERE SILENT. IT WAS THE CHAMPAK TREE THAT SPOKE —
THEY TOOK AWAY THE EIGHT CHILDREN BORN TO THE SEVENTH QUEEN AND BURIED THEM IN THE ASH-HEAP HERE!

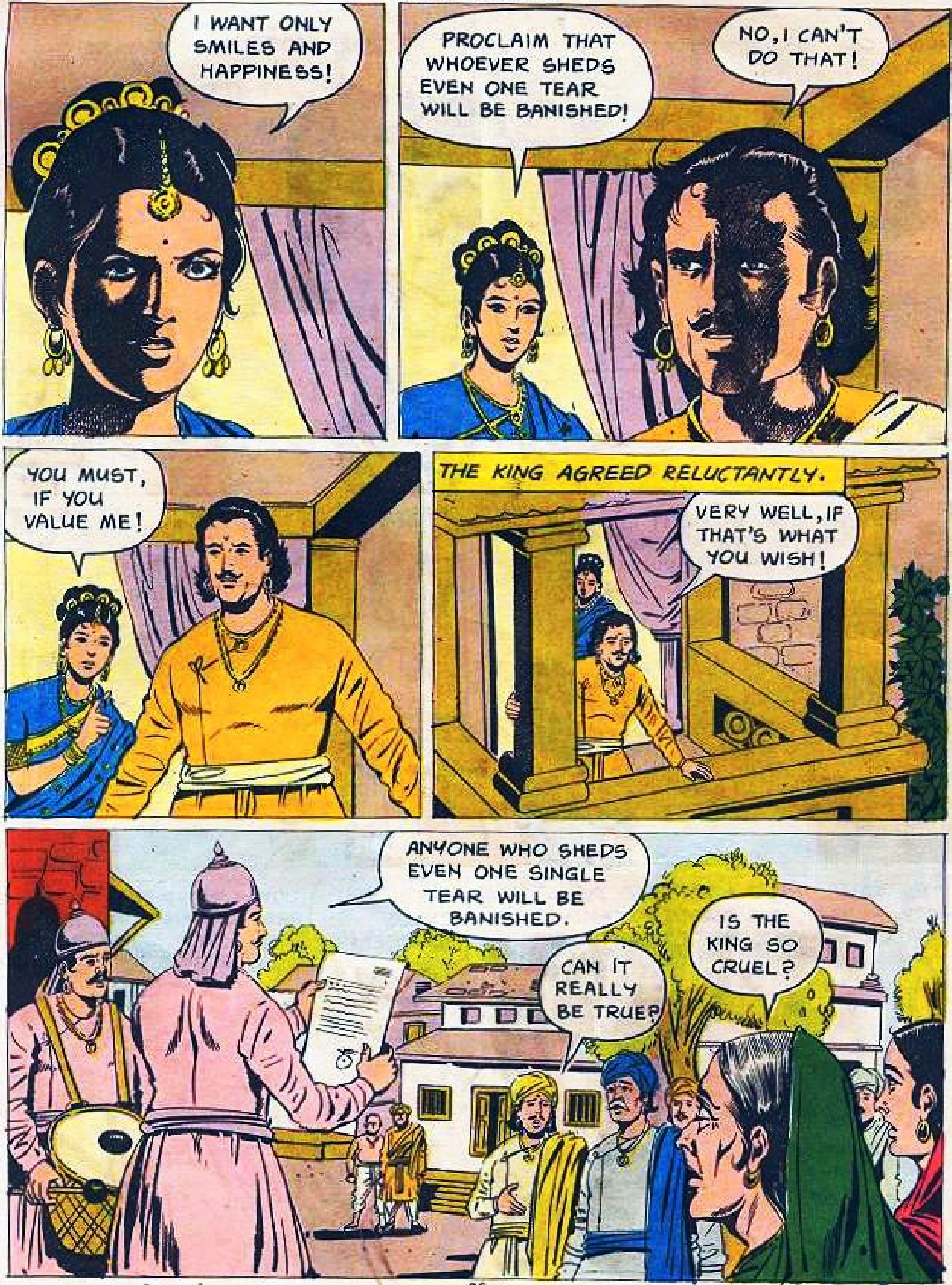

YOU CRUEL, WICKED WOMEN!
WE'RE SORRY. FORGIVE US, MY LORD.
I CAN'T TRUST YOU AGAIN. YOU SHALL ALL BE BANISHED!
OH, NO!
NO, MY LORD!
MAY I SAY SOMETHING, MY LORD?
YES, OF COURSE, MY DEAR.
THEY ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES TO BLAME.
WHY NOT? DIDN'T THEY DO THIS DEED?
YES, BUT WASN'T IT YOUR DUTY TO ENQUIRE INTO THE MATTER?
BUT....


CAN A HUMAN BEING GIVE BIRTH TO CRABS? HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THIS HAPPENING BEFORE?
NO....
THEN LET THERE BE NO MORE TALK OF BANISHMENTS, MY LORD!
LET US FORGET THE PAST AND BE HAPPY TOGETHER.
IF YOU SAY SO, MY DEAR.
PLEASE FORGIVE US FOR WHAT WE DID!
I SHALL NEVER THINK OF IT AGAIN.
FATHER! MOTHER! JUST LOOK AT THE GARDEN! IT'S FULL OF FLOWERS!
AND ALL THE BIRDS ARE SINGING!
AND THE KING, THE SEVEN QUEENS, AND THE CHILDREN LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER!

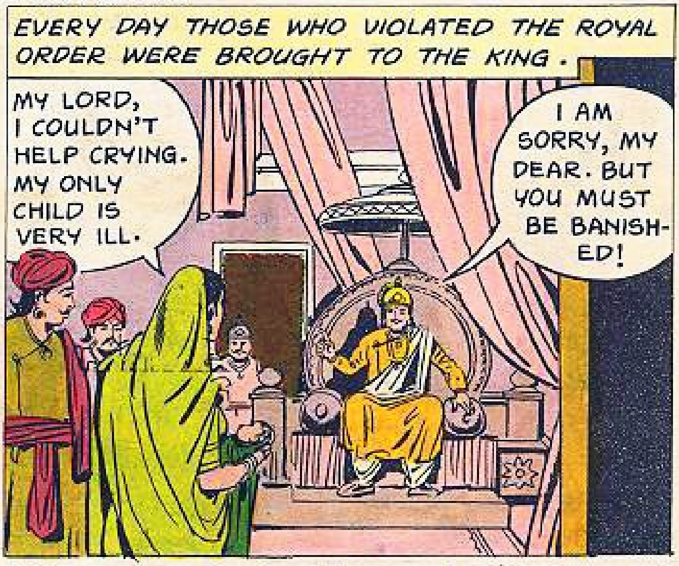

THE VALUE OF TEARS
IT WAS THE MONTH OF SPRING. FLOWERS WERE BLOOMING EVERYWHERE AND THE BIRDS WERE SINGING. THERE WAS HAPPINESS IN EVERY HEART.
HOW BEAUTIFUL THE WHOLE WORLD LOOKS!
IT'S JUST THE DAY FOR CELEBRATING THE SPRING FESTIVAL!
THE QUEEN WENT TO THE FOREST WITH HER FRIENDS AND MAIDS.
LOOK AT THE FLOWERS!
WHAT A RIOT OF COLOURS!


I'VE NEVER HEARD THE KOEL SING SO SWEETLY BEFORE!
I WISH THE DAY WOULD NEVER END!
BUT THE LIGHT IS FADING, DEAR QUEEN!
THE BIRDS ARE FLYING BACK TO THEIR NESTS.
I SUPPOSE WE, TOO, MUST MOVE ON.
I MUST TELL THE KING ALL ABOUT MY DAY IN THE FOREST.
I'LL SEE IF HE IS IN.
WELL?
HE IS STILL IN THE COURT-ROOM.

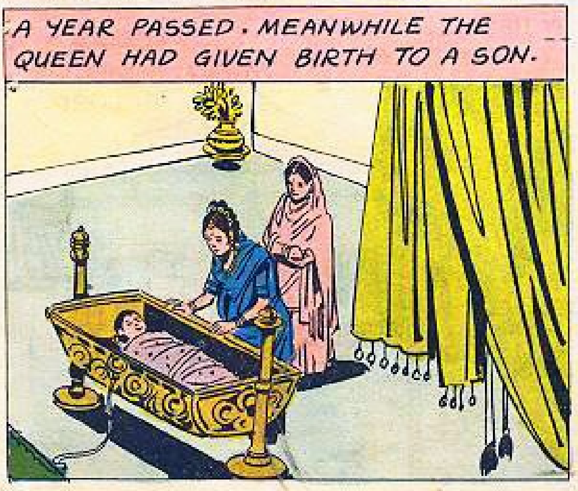

IT WAS ALMOST MIDNIGHT WHEN THE KING CAME IN.
WHY ARE YOU SO LATE, MY LORD?
THE SORROWS OF THE PEOPLE.
SORROWS?
YES, SORROWS AND PROBLEMS. WHO ELSE CAN HELP THEM BUT THEIR KING?
WHAT A SHAME IT IS TO WASTE A BEAUTIFUL DAY HEARING COMPLAINTS!
THE KING HAS HIS DUTIES TO PERFORM!
THE SAME THING HAPPENED DAY AFTER DAY. FINALLY, THE QUEEN BECAME VERY ANGRY.
WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS SO FULL OF WORRIES?
CAN'T YOU ENJOY YOURSELF?
HOW CAN I, WHEN THERE ARE SO MANY UNHAPPY PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD?


I WANT ONLY SMILES AND HAPPINESS!
PROCLAIM THAT WHOEVER SHEDS EVEN ONE TEAR WILL BE BANISHED!
NO, I CAN'T DO THAT!
YOU MUST, IF YOU VALUE ME!
THE KING AGREED RELUCTANTLY.
VERY WELL, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WISH!
ANYONE WHO SHEDS EVEN ONE SINGLE TEAR WILL BE BANISHED.
CAN IT REALLY BE TRUE?
IS THE KING SO CRUEL?


TEARS ARE OUR ONLY CONSOLATION.
CAN THE KING ROB US OF OUR BIRTH-RIGHT?


EVERY DAY THOSE WHO VIOLATED THE ROYAL ORDER WERE BROUGHT TO THE KING.
MY LORD, I COULDN'T HELP CRYING. MY ONLY CHILD IS VERY ILL.
I AM SORRY, MY DEAR. BUT YOU MUST BE BANISH-ED!


FINALLY —
SO MANY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN BANISHED! VERY SOON WE SHALL HAVE AN EMPTY CITY!
GOOD! LET ALL THE SAD ONES GO! THEY ARE NO LOSS TO US!


A YEAR PASSED. MEANWHILE THE QUEEN HAD GIVEN BIRTH TO A SON.


THEN IT WAS SPRING ONCE AGAIN. THE WOODS WERE ABLAZE WITH COLOUR, BUT —
HAVE YOU SEEN THE FLOWERS, MY QUEEN?


NO, I HAVEN'T HAD TIME. I DON'T WANT TO SEE ANYTHING TILL MY SON IS BETTER.
GET WELL SOON, MY PRECIOUS!
HE LOOKS VERY PALE!
HE IS COLD! CALL THE DOCTOR, QUICK!
THE DOCTOR CAME AT ONCE. BUT —
IT IS TOO LATE!
OH, NO, NO, NO!
MY SON!
THE NEXT DAY THE KING SENT FOR HER.
IT HAS BEEN REPORTED TO ME THAT YOU CRIED WHEN THE PRINCE DIED.
I DID, MY LORD.


THEN YOU, TOO, MUST BE BANISHED.
BUT I AM THE QUEEN!
A LAW, ONCE MADE, SPARES NO ONE — NOT EVEN THOSE WHO MAKE IT.
THEN I ACCEPT MY FATE.
THE QUEEN LEFT THE PALACE.
SHE WALKED TILL SHE REACHED THE FOREST, WHICH SHE NOW FOUND DARK AND LONELY.
I SUPPOSE I SHALL BE KILLED BY WILD ANIMALS.
BUT I HEAR VOICES! WHO CAN IT BE?


IT'S THE QUEEN WHO BANISHED US!
I'M NO LONGER THE QUEEN. AND NOW I, TOO, HAVE BEEN BANISHED.
QUEEN, WHERE ARE YOUR JEWELS?
I'VE LOST MY MOST PRECIOUS ONE : MY SON.
WE ARE ALL YOUR CHILDREN.
THEN LET ME SHARE YOUR LIFE.
THE QUEEN NURSED A CHILD WHO HAD FALLEN ILL.
YOU HAVE BEEN AWAKE ALL NIGHT, MY QUEEN. GO AND REST NOW.
I'LL STAY BY HIS SIDE TILL HE IS BETTER.
WE HAVE NEVER HAD SUCH BEAUTIFUL CLOTHES BEFORE!
I'M GLAD YOU LIKE THEM.


ONE BRIGHT MORNING, THE KING CAME TO THE FOREST IN HIS GOLDEN CHARIOT.
MY LORD!
MY QUEEN! YOU ARE HAPPY THEN?
I AM. I'VE FOUND MY CHILD IN ALL THESE CHILDREN...
...AND I HAVE REALISED THE VALUE OF TEARS.
YOU HAVE? THEN COME BACK TO OUR KINGDOM!
SO THE QUEEN AND ALL THE BANISHED PEOPLE RETURNED.


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